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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

The President
The White House

July 20, 1972

Dear Mr. President:

We greatly appreciate the time you gave us immediately on our return from China to present the highlights of our June 23 - July 7 journey there on behalf of the House of Representatives. During our discussion we promised you a written report, and we submit this letter as that report.

We have two attachments of possible interest:

(1) Transcripts. Unofficial transcripts of three formal discussions in Peking, one with Premier Chou En-lai that lasted over three hours, one with Foreign Affairs Vice Minister Ch'iao Kuan-hua, the other with First Deputy Director of the Chinese Council for the Promotion of International Trade Li Hsi-fu. These transcripts, prepared from notes of our staff assistants, are virtually verbatim. Conceivably they contain nuances and observations that may serve to supplement more detailed talks with which you are familiar -- yours of last February, Senators Mansfield's and Scott's in May, and most recently Dr. Kissinger's.

(2) Personnel Notes. We attach a listing of people we encountered who appeared to be especially competent and forceful -- second and third echelon leaders who may rise in the Chinese hierarchy in coming years.

Let us first relate a few subjective impressions. China, we found, is utterly fascinating, and in certain respects frightening. From the day of our arrival in Shanghai on June 26 until we left 10 days later,

the official atmosphere was not only cordial and unfailingly gracious, but also seemingly forthcoming. Very few questions were obviously ducked -- most notably questions about Lin Piao, but also questions about the legal and penal system and questions about the course of U.S.-China trade.

We realize we were shown only what they wanted us to see, and nearly all places visited had been meticulously prepared for our arrival (the environs swept clean; the hosts carefully briefed on what to do and say; little children primed to undertake games and classroom activities precisely as we arrived). But, of course, we do much the same thing for foreign officials visiting our country, so we are not critical in mentioning these preparations. Actually, they suggest that the Chinese leadership goes to considerable lengths to impress foreign visitors, including Americans, favorably. That may bode well for the effort you have so well begun to clear away unnecessary barriers to improved relations between our countries.

The general population displayed exceptional interest in our party only in the cities of Shenyang and Anshan, Liaoning Province, where official American visitors have not been seen for almost a quarter-century. In Peking, Shanghai and Canton we were relatively ignored, though substantial crowds assembled in the streets as we shopped in Friendship Stores in Peking and Canton. But in the northeast, not only did the people seem genuinely interested in our comings and goings, they also displayed a very active friendliness -- spontaneously racing from fields and paddies to see our motorcade, and waving and clapping hands and smiling warmly at

us as we moved through their streets. (We were, it should be noted, following in the wake of Premier Bandaranaike of Sri Lanka, for whom rousing welcome demonstrations had definitely been prearranged. We never knew for sure whether the street crowds considered our motorcade part of her entourage.) Our unscheduled visit to a department store in downtown Shenyang one Sunday brought out several thousand curious people eager to see us and welcome us warmly. From this experience we deduce that future American visits to outlying places, in contrast to cities like Peking, Shanghai and Canton where people are doubtless jaded, like Washingtonians, with foreign visitors, will elicit similar favorable reactions. Of course, we do not know about the willingness of the Chinese leaders to have U.S. officials, or any Americans, ranging widely about the country; they did, however, consent readily to our request to visit Shenyang, so possibly more visits to outlying regions will be feasible in the near future.

Incidentally, and in contrast with experiences both of us have had in the Soviet Union, we did not have "the feeling we were being watched"; the Chinese did not seem to be excessively hypercautious about movements of our party. For instance, one of our staff took early-morning jogs for some distance down different main streets of Peking, with never any attempt to impede him. Naturally there was tight surveillance by security agents, but hardly more than our Secret Service provides foreign officials in the United States and less conspicuously. Another of our party (State Department) attempted a stroll around the block in Shenyang but was intercepted by an agent two-thirds of the way around and sternly directed back to the guest

house, so obviously we were under tight (protective (?)) guard there and perhaps elsewhere. But the point we make is that the Chinese technique of control strikes us as notably more subtle and less oppressive than we have experienced in the Soviet Union and Eastern European Communist States.

The Chinese did show a sensitivity to our visit to Shenyang, which suggests that they are restive over American inspection of their industrialization (and perhaps military bases) in that region. The revised itinerary timed our takeoff for Shenyang at sunset so we did not see any major seaports or any industrial complexes in Northeast China from the air. However we were permitted to photograph the iron and steel production plants we toured in Anshan, and everything else we were shown except an electrical transformer station.

Still relating general impressions, we would report that from Shenyang to Peking to Canton the people of China gave every indication of being clean and healthy, strong and industrious, disciplined and highly motivated, well-fed and well-clothed. Neither of us recollects seeing even one Chinese who appeared to be suffering from hunger, nor did we see much aimless wandering about, or diseased, cruelly crippled or poverty-stricken people. Most important of all, the people appeared to be happy, generally busy and purposeful as if they knew their specific tasks and were reasonably content with them. In most cases they gave an impression of regarding themselves as measurably better off than in pre-Liberation days. In reporting this

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we except the intellectuals and urban youth who are shunted off to factories and communes after completing secondary education; this group in China, encompassing probably most of the best minds, seems determined to put the best face on the Cultural Revolution's educational experiment, but our impression is that (1) many still regard this diversion to factories and fields as only an experiment, and (2) we suspect most of them find it burdensome. No doubt your China experts are giving close attention to the potential of serious damage to excellence in China from Chairman Mao's attack on "elitism" in the Cultural Revolution. We think it could blight China's future, particularly as it may reduce the receptivity of the country's future leaders to technological advances so desperately needed in so many areas. When their best students are diverted to primitive regions to labor in ill-equipped machine shops and do stoop labor in rice paddies for periods ranging from six months to three years or more, intellectual commitment and keenness are likely to suffer, so the future leadership may turn out to be of lesser quality than has been the case in the past.

Having said this, one cannot refrain from observing that for many young Americans of intellectual and academic prowess, a periodic exposure to the realities of workaday life and hard manual labor might be broadening and beneficial. We believe Chairman Mao's Cultural Revolution may have swung too far in this direction, but there are some indications such as the reopening of Sun Yat-sen University in Canton, that the pendulum is swinging back.

From the beginning to the end of our travels there seemed to be a deliberate effort to insulate us from the military influence, whatever

it is, in the Chinese society. We had virtually no contact at all with the uniformed military anyplace we visited. At every stop we would be graciously received by Vice Chairmen of Revolutionary Committees, whether provincial, municipal or local, but never were we received by a Chairman. We informally learned that the Chairmen are active members of the People's Liberation Army in virtually every case, so we deduce that the role of the military is powerful and perhaps dominant; but we can only report that we were shielded from it and are therefore unable to assess it for you. Of course, some of our hosts may well have been PLA officers in mufti.

Similarly, we were never able to discern the real techniques and penetration of Communist party direction and control throughout the system, or the effect this may have on the public psyche, though we sensed this influence continually, as we did the military. We make the point for this reason: how much the ostensible public mood of purposefulness and contentment in fact reflects fear -- how pervasively the party and/or military control the minds and hearts of the people -- we could not ferret out. But we do think it may be meaningful that the government apparently went to some lengths to insulate us from these influences in their society.

We mentioned that China struck us as "frightening" as well as fascinating. We got that feeling even though Chinese strength is obviously still far more potential than real, her internal problems of education, food, shelter, industrialization, agricultural mechanization and just generally catching up with modern technology are no less than staggering in scope, as Premier Chou candidly admitted to us, and therefore the assertions of Chinese

leaders that China is not expansionist are believable.

Nevertheless, some aspects of what is happening in China concerned us deeply. We refer to the all-encompassing Maoist indoctrination of the children beginning even at age 3; the disciplined behavior of the countless millions of people who comprise China; the near total subordination of all effort to the purposes of the State; and the youngsters' evident delight in the revolutionary dogma in which they are steeped all day long every school day (six days a week). We saw many boys and girls as young as six years of age ardently acting out in songs, dances and classroom work the most militant themes of revolution and military activity. How long this heavy indoctrination will linger in their hearts and minds, and to what eventual use it may be put, we do not know. But considering the totality of this teaching process, the obvious enjoyment the children of China derive from it did give us concern. We sensed that ultimately China could become vastly dangerous in the international arena, should these millions of bright-eyed children reach maturity with a deeply-implanted hostility toward other societies at the same time that China reaches a technologically advanced stage.

We were particularly impressed by the Puritanical ethic of this society. Some of the "old virtues" so important to America's rise seem to be deeply rooted in today's Chinese society. It appears to be an austere, Cotton Mather type of society -- prim and proper, not simply prudish about sex but actively hostile to any licentiousness or self-indulgence of any kind, with one and all marching and singing along the one sure road to political

salvation according to Mao's commandments. If in our country we constantly broadcast and sang the militant lines of "Onward Christian soldiers, marching as to war" with the old-time fervor, no doubt we would give foreigners the same impression we got of the Chinese. It is this ethic, this emotional, near religious commitment, the intense discipline of this society, that evoke our word "frightening." We conclude that the people of the United States are going to have to forego a great deal of their present permissiveness and disregard of old virtues if they are to stand up to what Maoist China may well be two or three decades from now, assuming that China survives its leadership crisis when Chairman Mao and other aging leaders depart.

Turning now to the topics touched upon in our discussions with Premier Chou and Vice Minister Ch'iao, we have compressed them for you into the following tabulation:

1. Vietnam:

a. Remarkably, or so it seemed to us, only once during the entire trip was the blockade of North Vietnam even mentioned by our Chinese hosts, and then only in passing by Premier Chou. The bombing of North Vietnam was mentioned much more emphatically. (See Chou transcript, p. 22)

b. Both Chou and Ch'iao held to the policy line that (1) they will support North Vietnam, and (2) they will not intervene in our current impasse with North Vietnam. While both stressed that China has sent no troops to Vietnam, neither specifically stated that China would not send them if asked. (See Ch'iao transcript, p. 27)

- c. Both Ch'iao and Chou insisted that the resolution of the Vietnam war will have to be political, not military.
- d. Both described Vietnam as unconquerable throughout history, even by China.
- e. Chou described Thieu as a U.S. "puppet."
- f. Both gave full support to the tripartite, coalition government proposal for South Vietnam.
- g. Chou stressed desire for neutrality on the part of all five key Southeast Asia nations.
- h. Chou: "Elections in South Vietnam will not do." Said Thieu would control them with guns.
- i. Both Ch'iao and Chou laid heavy emphasis on the 17th Parallel being a military line, not a political demarcation comparable to the 38th Parallel in Korea and the dividing line between East and West Germany.

2. Soviet Union:

- a. Chou was extremely emphatic that the Soviets will never reduce their military effort; he seemed eager for reassurance that the balancing U.S. power will not be reduced. He repeatedly took sharp and specific exception to proposals to cut U.S. defense spending by as much as 30%. (See Chou transcript, pp. 12-14, 22, 29-31)

b. Chou in effect discounted the SALT agreements -- they fail to control quality, and anyway the Soviets will go ahead building their strength, forcing the U.S. also to increase its defense spending.

c. Yet Ch'iao explicitly said, "We approve of the SALT agreements," though he too said quality limitations are needed.

d. No big power should have predominance in Southeast Asia. Both Chou and Ch'iao stressed this.

e. Ch'iao: Our policy is still to try to improve relations with the Soviet Union because of the long common border, but quite some time will be required.

f. Throughout, we detected a profound distrust and dislike of the Soviet Union, fear of her power and possible intentions, and concern lest political efforts in the United States to cut the defense budget will make us too weak to counter Soviet designs on China.

3. Japan:

a. Keen awareness of U.S. concern over Japanese imports into the U.S.; amusement over it, really. Ch'iao chuckled that the U.S. is now a "colony" of Japan.

b. Ch'iao: Retention of U.S. troops in Japan may breed strong Japanese nationalism and resurgent rearmament; as in the case of Germany, it is "impossible to disarm an entire nation."

4. Taiwan:

a. Chou: Taiwan is still part of China; favorably recalled Shanghai Communique language on this point. He obliquely credited Senator Mansfield for this, saying he (Chou) could not have thought up this clause himself.

b. Chou: Have to settle the Vietnam war in order to get Taiwan settled.

c. Very difficult for Chinese to visit America while two-China problem continues. Washington, D. C. is "off limits" to official PRC visitors so long as Nationalist China has an Embassy here.

d. Sensitive to Judd, Anna Chennault and McIntyre.

e. A number of our group came away with the feeling that both Chou and Ch'iao are relatively relaxed about Taiwan, expecting it to go their way inevitably in due time.

5. Korea:

a. Ch'iao: This problem should have been solved by now.

b. Ch'iao: U.S. and China should both help North and South Korea to come together gradually, even though neither system can be imposed upon the other.

6. Other Foreign:

a. Chou evinced irritation over Secretary Rogers' opposition to the Philippine move to change SEATO; termed it a continuation of Dulles' policies. (See Chou transcript, p. 7)

b. Chou: Mansfield is unrealistic in calling for withdrawal of U.S. troops from Europe (presumably, Chou wants them held there to keep the Soviets from shifting more strength to the China border).

c. Both Chou and Ch'iao insist China has no ambition for expansion; too much to do at home.

d. Ch'iao: Urges U.S. support of Prince Sihanouk of Cambodia and the King of Laos. Says Sihanouk's only "ism" is, possibly, Buddhism.

7. Nuclear:

a. Ch'iao: On nuclear weapons, our policy is that all countries should prohibit their manufacture and destroy present stockpiles.

b. China develops nuclear weapons only for defense, with fewest possible tests.

c. We will never be the first to use nuclear weaponry; if ever used, for defense only. We await the UN answer to our proposal on this.

8. Normalization of U.S. - China relations:

a. More Congressional contacts will help both countries:

(1) Chou: Keep them bipartisan; easier to handle.

(2) Ch'iao: They can write direct to the People's Institute of Foreign Affairs or go through Paris or Ottawa.

b. We mustn't let past differences control our future relations.

c. Public thinking on Sino-American relations is changing very rapidly and cannot be stopped (the inevitability of progress in normalization was emphasized by both Chou and Ch'iao).

d. We must go forward step-by-step, gradually; China has much "preparatory work" to do.

e. Much aware that normalization is now popular in America.

f. Chou: We want to relax tensions; our systems are different but we can still find common ground as long as we both want to relax tensions.

9. Exchanges:

- a. Congressional -- more are desired, but limited by shortage of interpreters and facilities (both Chou and Ch'iao were very clear on receptivity to more Congressional visits).
- b. Better for U.S. citizens to visit China than for Chinese to America; the U.S. two-China policy in the way.
- c. Must proceed gradually; administratively difficult to handle a heavy influx.
- d. Medicine will be the best and first area to expand contacts; visits should be brief at first, both ways. Special interest in acupuncture (for U.S.), cancer, stroke and heart disease.
- e. Mechanization of agriculture of interest ("great interest" expressed by Ch'iao in mechanized fruit pickers).
- f. Ch'iao: We should exchange information on pollution matters. "Our people can go to your country and look at your antipollution devices and your people can come here and see what our problems are, and help each other."
- g. Other exchange areas exist, but "we must advance step-by-step and are moving too rapidly."

11. Trade:

Neither Chou nor Ch'iao, nor also a top Chinese trade official, manifested any real interest in major trade initiatives. Chou ducked it; Ch'iao downplayed it; the trade official, Li Hsi-fu a deputy director of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade, was studiously diffident, linking trade to further improvement of political relations -- the least cooperative of any major Chinese official during the trip.

12. Prisoners:

a. Both Chou and Ch'iao would commit only by saying they have "noted" the question.

b. Ch'iao flatly asserted that "as far as I know" there are no other prisoners beyond those three known now to the U.S.; the way he said this persuades us there are no others known to him.

c. Ch'iao said future handling of any prisoner problems will be above-board and a new compact between U.S.-China will make this problem "much better."

d. Ch'iao: Mr. Downey is in good health.

e. The Chinese refused to accept a package that we (Ford) proffered for one of the military prisoners; they suggested that it be handled through the Hong Kong Red Cross. This

is being done via the U.S. Consulate General in Hong Kong; normally, the next meeting of Red Cross representatives will be held July 30.

In the interest of brevity, we tabulate a number of other general impressions, some of which may be of interest:

1. The remarkable cleanliness of cities and the countryside. There are virtually no flies, no dogs, no cats in their cities. (During our entire trip through urban and rural areas we saw four flies, one dog and two cats). As you know, this is a Mao fetish. This effort to protect the public health, this emphasis on neatness and cleanliness, is worthy of American emulation.
2. Thousands of trees planted along highways and on hillsides. Again, it would help America to do the same.
3. Acupuncture -- plainly promising for anesthesia; perhaps less so for treatment, but both are certainly deserving of American analysis. We watched three operations and 3 dental extractions in which this technique was used, and our entire group, including the physician with us, was much impressed.
4. Great artistic talents of Chinese children, bordering on phenomenal. We could not help but yearn for a comparable artistic emphasis in our own school systems.
5. Heavy stress on arts and crafts (severe ideological restraints, however, on music and literature) from childhood up; bears examination as

we press for improved quality of American life.

6. Emphasis on Chinese history but using it for revolutionary propaganda against "exploitation of the masses."

7. Defeminization of Chinese women as evident in a unisex standard of dress. Our hosts made a special effort to show Mrs. Boggs and Mrs. Ford that women played a significant leadership role in China. We saw women involved in medicine, teaching, interpreting, and, of course, working as airline stewardesses, waitresses, and sales persons in stores, farm workers, street sweepers, and, in one instance, as a member of a Municipal Revolutionary Committee. We also witnessed two attractive young women working on high voltage power lines. However, in all the serious talks the only women present were stenographers.

8. Primitive methods of agriculture but with an exciting (for us, perhaps threatening) potential for mechanization.

9. Luxuriant and exotic variety of Chinese cuisine (at least, for us). Almost total absence of non-Chinese food and drink.

10. Paucity of automobiles; plethora of bicycles. We also saw very few draught animals.

11. Vast use of people in place of machines, or animals.

12. Pervasiveness of the teachings of Mao -- the "Communist Confucius." Total lack of foreign literature.

13. The "tea custom," the stilted, rote-style briefings, the mea culpa routine of lower officials, the standard plea for criticism of their efforts.
14. The extra ordinary attractiveness (and brightness) of Chinese school children.
15. The shouting of answers required of children -- military-academy-esque (characteristic of Chinese schools, we understand, throughout Asia).
16. The military organization and methodology of factories and communes.
17. Perfection since the 1949 "Liberation"; the unworthiness of all before.
18. The unanswered (and unmentioned) riddle -- what follows Mao?
19. Flat denial of Red Chinese involvement in drug traffic.
20. Taboo against petty thievery (in our case, anyway).
21. The military strutting and revolutionary songs of little children.
22. Huge declamatory, red signboards exhorting against the people's own weaknesses and the common foes (including the U.S. in Shenyang and Canton).

23. The comparative quietude of Chinese cities, lacking heavy automobile traffic. Also rubber and leather sandals have replaced wooden clogs.

24. The meticulous tilling of every available inch of productive soil.

25. The hot-and-cold wash cloth custom (also worthy of American emulation, though our extensive air conditioning makes this less attractive than in China).

26. The multiplicity of courses in Chinese meals, the grace of all-around toasting, the Gambei, the eyeball-to-eyeball clinking of glasses.

27. The translators' skills, the escorts' (required?) solicitude and courtesies, the constant honking (despite street signs banning it) in order to move us through streets teeming with people, carts and bicycles.

28. Pedicycles, hand tractors converted to passenger vehicles, old women straining with heavy carts, old men bicycling with clumsy loads, people sardined into buses. But no rickshas.

29. Hand-clapping in the streets to show friendship; the clappee clapping the clappor, shy waving back when waved to.

30. Regimented crowds in the sports arena, lockstep entries and exits of athletes, the instant silencing of the ovation to Chou


En-lai by one loudspeaker shout -- "gola." (Enough!)

31. The agelessness of the culture and its most conspicuous effluvia -- glittering palaces and tombs of breathtaking splendor for rulers centuries ago.

In sum, Mr. President, we found this trip to be the most fascinating overseas mission in all of our public service, and we are grateful for the part your Administration played in making it possible. From the enclosures you will note that throughout our discussions both of us stood firmly with your Vietnam position, and we hope that in this and other respects we contributed to the short and long-term interests of our country. We hope also that the enclosures and the foregoing discussion will be of some value to you in carrying forward your historic initiatives with the People's Republic of China.

Sincerely,


Hale Boggs, M.C.
Majority Leader


Gerald R. Ford, M.C.
Minority Leader